

News Release

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Try Transit Week Spurs Riders to Travel

Clallam Transit System celebrated 35 years in service by providing activities, producing celebratory items and presentations, and having two free ride days for riders throughout the week of October 11 through October 17. To start the week off, CTS hosted a community celebration on Sunday October 11 to introduce past General Managers and to share stories of “how we came to be” in its early years and compared to what services CTS is providing now. During this time, a custom over-sized rendition of the original CTS bus token, made from powder-coated steel, was unveiled. Staff distributed custom wrapped chocolate bars with the CTS 35 year anniversary logo as well as rules to a “Try Transit” game.

“Try Transit” was introduced as a promotional game for the public to get on the bus and travel to places within CTS’ service area to discover new destinations or to ride the bus for the first time. Riders received a “travel punch card”. The idea behind this activity was to allow riders to experience the flexibility of public transit. Staff decided on several existing pass outlets as well as new-to-CTS destinations to invite to play the game including Mt Pleasant IGS, Bay Variety, Haggen, Rainshadow Coffee, Forks Outfitters and the Sequim, Port Angeles, Forks, and Clallam Bay Libraries. All participating locations were enthusiastic about participating in this program. The North Olympic Library System was especially gracious to have all their branches included in the game to hopefully expose the accessibility of their locations to the bus system. Each of these locations were provided a unique hole-punch which were actually used in CTS’s history to punch transfer cards. Each being unique for the route they were used for.

To further encourage participation, riders who completed their cards by receiving all 10 punches received a premium bus pass for no cost. Cards were distributed at the punch card destinations, as well as at both Clallam Transit offices. This information was distributed in an advertisement in the paper and posted at all participating locations. Approximately 90 cards were distributed. There were three participants who completed all 10 locations and received a free premium pass. All other cards with three or more destinations reached were entered into a drawing to win a premium bus pass. There were two entries provided for this drawing.

The winners were contacted at the end of the month. One winner, who reached all 10 destinations, provided some information about his time playing the game. Jon Kirshbaum, a 72 year old man from Sequim, lives in the Dial-A-Ride zone. He rarely goes to the West End, but decided to make the trip for “Try Transit” week. He visited Forks Outfitters, a CTS pass outlet, as well as the Forks library. He then had lunch and came home. He was able to spend about

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three hours in Forks. It took him three days to complete the card, traveling for a half a day each day. He appreciates Clallam Transit as his primary transportation and recommended that CTS make the Forks library a permanent bus stop for the convenience, something he would have never suggested had he not traveled to Forks for the game. The other winners were Kenneth Doolittle, Evelyn Simpson, and Heather Murray. Ms. Murray was the first to turn in a card, completing six destinations in a single day.

Finally a brief survey was distributed to the participating locations asking for comments. The North Olympic Library System was appreciative of being involved noting that they had approximately six to 12 new visitors at each location and commented that “without the program, we may not have had a chance to connect with them”.

On the actual anniversary day of October 13, and the following Saturday October 17, CTS provided free ride days for all its services as an outreach to new riders and the taxpayers. On Tuesday, ridership increased by 443 rides, a 15 percent increase to fixed route and an 11 percent increase to paratransit. On Saturday the increase of 458 rides was a 32 percent increase to fixed route and a 50 percent increase to paratransit for a typical Saturday. Bus Operator Ed Stanard mentioned that Saturday was especially impressive with the number of riders he had at one time on his routes. He definitely noticed the increase that day. Another couple was riding on their 35th wedding anniversary, and were very pleased with Operator Jeff Dixon and the service CTS provides, giving everything a “thumbs up”.